REMARKS

Examination of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is requested. By the present amendment, claims 2 and 9 are canceled and claims 1, 10, 11, 13, 19, and 20 are amended. Claims 1, 3-8, and 10-21 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-17 and 19-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Takahashi (US 6,913,281 B2). For the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Anticipation requires a single prior art reference that discloses each element of the claim. W.L. Gore & Associates v. Garlock, Inc., 220 U.S.P.Q. 303, 313 (Fed. Cir. 1983), cert. denied 469 U.S. 851 (1984). There must be no difference between the claimed invention and the reference disclosure, as viewed by a person of ordinary skill in the field of the invention. Scripps Clinic & Research Foundation v. Genentech Inc., 18 U.S.P.Q.2d 1001, 1010 (Fed. Cir. 1991). "The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim". Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co., 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 U.S.P.Q.2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

Claim 1 recites a fill tube having an open end portion for directing inflation fluid to flow axially through a passage in a non-inflatable portion of an inflatable curtain into an inflatable front or rear portion of the curtain, and at least one aperture for directing inflation fluid to flow generally radially from the fill tube into the other of the front and rear portions of the inflatable curtain.

Takahashi does not teach or suggest this structure. In Takahashi, the axial end of the fill tube is closed, as clearly shown by the surface shading lines in Fig. 3. The specification in Takahashi does not teach or suggest otherwise.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Takahashi should be withdrawn and claims 1 should be allowed. Claims 3-8 and 10-18, depending from claim 1, are therefore allowable as depending from an allowable claim and for the specific features recited therein.

Regarding claim 7, Takahashi does not teach or suggest the fill tube positioned in a front portion of the curtain and directing axial inflation fluid flow into a rear portion of the curtain. Claim 7 is therefore allowable for this further reason.

Regarding claim 8, Takahashi does not teach or suggest the fill tube entering the curtain through a front edge of the curtain. Claim 8 is therefore allowable for this further reason.

Regarding claim 10, Takahashi does not teach or suggest the fill tube having a length sufficient to position the open end portion near the passage. Claim 10 is therefore allowable for this further reason.

Regarding claim 12, Takahashi does not teach or suggest the fill tube extending into the front or rear portion along an upper edge of the inflatable curtain, the open end portion directing inflation fluid along the upper edge into said passage. Claim 12 is therefore allowable for this further reason.

Regarding claim 15, Takahashi does not teach or suggest an open end portion of the fill tube directing inflation fluid into the inflatable curtain in a direction generally parallel to a longitudinal axis of the fill tube and at least one aperture directing inflation fluid into the inflatable curtain in a direction transverse to the longitudinal axis. Claim 15 is therefore allowable for this further reason.

Regarding claim 17, Takahashi does not teach or suggest an open end portion and at least one aperture that have flow areas are proportional to the inflatable volume of the front and rear portions. Claim 17 is therefore allowable for this further reason.

Claims 19 and 20 recite a fill tube having an open end portion for directing inflation fluid to flow axially through a passage in a non-inflatable portion of an inflatable curtain into an inflatable front portion of the curtain, and at least one aperture for directing inflation fluid to flow generally radially from the fill tube into an inflatable rear portion of the inflatable curtain.

Takahashi does not teach or suggest this structure. As set forth above in regard to claim 1, the axial end of the fill tube is closed in Takahashi (see Fig. 3). For these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Takahashi should be withdrawn and claims 19 and 20 should be allowed.

Claim 21 recites a fill tube having an open end portion for directing an axial flow of inflation fluid from the fill tube into the inflatable curtain, and at least one aperture for directing a generally radial flow of inflation fluid from the fill tube to help reduce pressure drop in the inflatable curtain induced by the axial flow of inflation fluid from said open end portion.

Takahashi does not teach or suggest this structure. As set forth above in regard to claim 1, the axial end of the fill tube is closed in Takahashi (see Fig. 3). Takahashi cannot teach or suggest axial inflation flow and thus cannot teach or suggest radial openings that direct radial flow to help reduce pressure drop induced by axial inflation fluid flow. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the

rejection of claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Takahashi should be withdrawn and claims 19 and 20 should be allowed.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 3-8, and 10-21 are in condition for allowance and allowance of claims 1, 3-8, and 10-21 is respectfully requested. It is respectfully submitted that the above identified application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,

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